



# FAS WORLDWIDE

United States Department of Agriculture  
Foreign Agricultural Service

June 2007

An online review of Foreign Agricultural Service initiatives and services

## Market and Trade Data

### France's Market for Halal Foods

**By Laurent J. Journo and Nina Peacock**

France is home to the largest Muslim community (4.7 million people) in Europe, and represents its largest halal market, with sales ranging from \$2 to \$4 billion in calendar 2005. The halal food market has experienced significant growth, and distribution is shifting from small traditional markets to high-volume retail outlets.

Hypermarkets and multinational food producers are increasing their selections of halal foods. Although local Muslim butcher shops continue to dominate the halal meat segment, large producers and processors are providing competition.

Multinational companies are offering a wider variety of halal processed foods and non-meat products. Halal consumers, whether in the Muslim community or the general population, have cultivated multi-ethnic tastes, as halal products now include Chinese spring rolls, chicken nuggets, ravioli, and pizza. Nestlé offers halal soups under the brand name, Maggi, which are produced in its Moroccan factories, and is currently studying ways to expand its product line.

Haribo is offering a new line of gelatin-free candies to increase its sales in Europe and the Middle East. Arab-Cola, which offers a range of halal certified colas, juices, and mint tea, was launched in France in 2005. It sold between 12 and 15 million half-liter and 1.5-liter bottles that year.

#### Halal Certification

Halal certification applies to meat and non-meat products. Certification requirements for halal food products in France may be different from those in other European

#### e-Sources

##### FAS Paris:

##### Source of Market Assistance and Information

The FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs in Paris, France, can assist U.S. suppliers interested in this market. For assistance, contact the office at: E-mail: [agparis@usda.gov](mailto:agparis@usda.gov)

For information on the French market for U.S. halal items, visit the office's website: <http://www.amb-usa.fr/fas/fas.htm>

**Food Export USA** will possibly sponsor a halal buyers' delegation next year, from a number of countries to the United States. The main goal for this mission would be to organize one-on-one meetings between suppliers and importers to expand exports of halal products from the United States. If this activity is approved, the FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs, Paris, France would recruit French buyers to participate in the mission.



Halal retail store  
Photos courtesy of the FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs, Paris, France



Halal restaurant



Halal butcher shop

countries. It is advised that exporters verify the acceptability of certification with their importers.

Only the three Grand Mosques of Paris, Evry, and Lyon can grant permits to slaughterers who observe halal rituals, according to the French Interior Ministry and the French Agricultural and Fisheries Ministry. The Grande Mosque of Paris is France's main halal certifying agency, and oversees distribution of 70 percent of halal products; the Mosque of Paris also stipulates that only meat of French origin can be certified as halal.

Halal products do not only include meat products only but also, more recently, have expanded into other food categories; (e.g., snack foods, candies, dairy products). Private companies are also beginning to provide halal certification. The criteria for halal certification vary among the three main mosques and among private companies.

The absence of government-recognized halal certification requirements has contributed to French consumer skepticism about products labeled as halal. Thus, the primary challenge is gaining consumer confidence in the halal designation.

### **A Young and Growing Niche**

Nevertheless, France's halal market is an expanding niche, with demand growing along with new products being offered. Halal

consumption has been increasing anywhere from 7 to 15 percent per year since 1998.

Halal products appeal particularly to the younger generation whose parents or grandparents immigrated to France. Consumers under 30 years old account for approximately 80 percent of France's halal consumers. Consumers of Arab and Berber origin buy halal products most frequently and spend the most per month on them.

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